



# TEAMSTERS CANADA RAIL CONFERENCE DIVISION 320



Social and Communications Office  
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Maple Ridge, B.C.  
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April 24, 2009

**Subject: Federal Pension Benefits Review**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Attached and appended you will find information about what is happening in Ottawa with Pension Benefits. Please take the time to read these documents, and write to your MP as this has an affect on our future. If you have any questions, please contact your applicable Local Chairman.

In Solidarity,

Murray Douglas  
S&C Officer

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**From:** TCRC Calgary [mailto:genchair@tcrcalgary.ca]  
**Sent:** April 23, 2009 1:58 PM  
**Subject:** Pension Hearings

Brothers and Sisters:

Please find the report below sent to this office by Mike Wheten and a further report sent by Dave Pollon who attended the Pension Review Committee Meeting in Winnipeg on April 17, 2009.

We have been advised that the Legislative Department is working closely with Teamsters Canada on this issue and are making presentations and lobbying the government on behalf of the members. As you will see from the documentation attached we have a long way to go in a short time.

We suggest that you read the documentation and post for all members to see. It is also strongly suggested that you post the phone number and email for Mr. Menzies and your MP for your area. **All members should be encouraged to call or email their MP and Mr. Menzies to show support for the TCRC/Teamsters Canada position.**

The Company should not be allowed to change the way the pension's rules have been administered for many years we strongly suggest that you as LC attempt to rally the members to bring up the concerns to the MP in your area. It is very important that we join forces with the Legislative Department on this crucial issue and advise our members to contact their local MP and Mr. Menzies.

Dave Able / Dave Olson

**Subject:** Re: Pension Review Committee Meeting Winnipeg April 17, 2009

Dave,

As Tom was in Ottawa at the National Office during this time, I was in attendance at the Winnipeg session for the Pension Plan Review Consultation to represent the Mb. Legislative Board. The room was a little small for the 150 plus people in attendance. The Chair of the session was Ted Menzies, Conservative MP, Macleod Riding and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance. Also on the Panel was John Grace, Superintendent of the Office of Financial Institutions of Canada. There were also 2 employees from the department of Finance who were charged with taking notes on the presentations made. Presentations made in favor of the proposed changes as submitted by the "Group of 7" came from MTS Allstream and Pension Investment Association of Canada (PIAC). The room was silent following those 2 presentations. They were followed by The International Machinists Union Lobbyist and the CN Pensioners Association whom both received loud applause from the crowd following their submissions. This was from 9-10:30.

At 10:40 the floor was opened and attendees were given 3 minutes to speak. There were approximately 18 speakers from the floor, which covered almost all employee groups from the so called Group of 7 companies. All messages were of the same concern for the security of Private Pension Plans in Canada. I have had trouble attaching a copy of my submission so it was as follows:

"Thank you Mr. Chair for the opportunity to speak on this very important issue. My name is David Pollon. I am a Locomotive Engineer with Canadian Pacific Railway. I am here on behalf of the Teamsters Canada Rail Conference Manitoba Legislative Board. We represent the operating employees of CNR, CPR and HBR on matters pertaining to Federal and Provincial Legislation in the Province of Manitoba. I have made over 780 contributions to my pension plan over the course of the past 30 years. I will retire in 2015 with 37 years of service with the company. We are fairly well paid, as a result of the hours of work that we are subject to, but the most important attraction to this job is the security of retirement which is provided by our Defined Benefit Pension Plan. The issue of pension security is important to both retirees, as well as, active employees. Like most people in a private pension plan, I know very little about the inner workings of the plan. As a result of this review process, I have begun to research a little more about the operation of our plan, and how this review will impact the future of so many people. I have based a lot of my concern about this review, on a book published in 1989 by Ann Finlayson. It is entitled "Whose Money Is It Anyway? The Showdown on Pensions". This book sheds light on the history of Public and Private Pensions in Canada and was published at the time of the establishment of the Pension Benefits Standards Act, which is the subject of this review. The battle for the Dominion Stores Pension Plan during the 1980's, is a key chapter in the book, and should be reviewed by all Canadians when it comes to the issue of pension plans and how they are funded. The amount of money generated by the investments of private pension plans is staggering. In 1986, according to the industry publication "Benefits Canada", the 20 largest plans in Canada had total assets of over \$47 Billion. Canadian National was ranked second at the time, with assets of \$5.8 Billion. We all know the performance of the financial markets in the 20 years since that time and can't imagine the revenue that has been generated since that book was published. As pension plan members, we have continuously paid our plan contributions without holiday. We have no choice in this matter. The corporations have had many contribution holidays, while we have continued to support and build the pension fund we are in. We believe that legislators have a responsibility to guarantee the security of all pension plans, now and in the future. This can only be achieved through the strengthening of legislation, such as that provided for, in our present Pension Benefits Standards Act. In closing, we want to ensure you understand that we are opposed to any change to Pension Legislation, that would in any way place the funds at risk. Thank You."

Like all in attendance it is hard to express all of the feelings of the membership and raise specific points in such a short period. That being said, there were some very good points raised from the floor which the panel took note of. As I was preparing myself for my 3 minutes, I did not catch all that was said but do know there were some good suggestions put forth. The CN Pensioners had a very good message which may be of interest to you. Ron Davis made that statement in Winnipeg. I would hope that our union would have access to all that was presented, as there were some good suggestions made.

In his closing, Mr. Menzies chose to focus on the governments concern to educate our youth on the issues of pensions and planning for retirement. He did focus on the need to "Harmonize" Pension Legislation" across the country with existing Provincial Acts. This could be a message that they are going to go in the direction of some

Provincial Acts which would be to the detriment of our present form of regulation. This is coming through very quickly in the next few weeks and we have very little time to react. I will be stating to take action in 1 hour from now at our regular scheduled meeting of Div. 668 in Minnedosa. Call me if you need more info or assistance.

In Solidarity,

Dave Pollon

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Brothers and Sisters;

The pension hearings chaired by Ted Menzies, Secretary to the Federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, ended in Winnipeg on April 17, 2009.

Attached please find a newspaper article from the Winnipeg Free Press relative to the Winnipeg hearings. You will note that Mr. Menzies made some interesting comments.

The Finance Department staff will now consider all of the information that was gathered and present a detailed report to the Finance Minister. The Finance Minister will then decide what, if anything, he will do with this initiative. If the Minister (government) decides to introduce new legislation there is ample time for us to meet with MPs and the Finance Committee to further make our views known and we will do so. For example, I will be accompanying Mr. Phil Benson, Teamsters Canada Lobbyist, and other union representatives, on Thursday, April 23 when we appear before the Federal Standing Committee on Finance.

From this point on the Canadian Labour Congress, Teamsters Canada, the TCRC, and all unions representing Federal employees, will continue to lobby all MPs on this most important issue. It should be remembered that we have a minority government. One question we are going to be asking MPs, especially Conservative MPs, is if they want to be remembered as the government who stole our senior citizens pensions.

Please note the attachment outlining our position on the major issues in this debate. You may wish to copy these points and post the letter on your bulletin board.

At this time it would be very helpful if you would call each member of your Division and ask them and other members of their family, if practicable, to contact their Federal Member of Parliament. Attached is a letter that can be addressed to your MP and signed by yourself. It is not necessary to affix postage to a letter addressed to an MP. You will most likely get a response but it will take four to eight weeks.

Click on the link below to access a list of all Members of Parliament.

<http://webinfo.parl.gc.ca/MembersOfParliament/MainMPsCompleteList.aspx?TimePeriod=Current&Language=E>

Or click on the link below to enter in your postal code to get your Member of Parliament

<http://www2.parl.gc.ca/parlinfo/Compilations/HouseOfCommons/MemberByPostalCode.aspx>

You may also phone your MP. We have attached a letter outlining six of our foremost concerns relative to this pension review. You could discuss these with your MP. However,

you may simply call him/her and let them know you are concerned that the government recently relaxed the Federal pension legislation (2006) and now they are proposing to relax the legislation again.

Politicians become very concerned when their ability to be re-elected is threatened. To that end it is simply the number of phone calls or letters they receive that concerns MPs the most. Generally speaking, the more phone calls or letters they receive the more concerned they become.

Remind them that they were elected to represent their constituents not wealthy corporations.

We will continue lobbying on this issue and will report back to you as this process unfolds.

Please note this email is also being sent to the Division officers.

Yours in solidarity,

**Mike Wheten**

Teamsters Canada Rail Conference

National Legislative Director